



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Telstra job cuts shows contempt for customers

Service will suffer for sake of higher share price

Time for the National Party to wake up and stand up for country people

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor believes that the announcement by Telstra to cut thousands of jobs shows the contempt that customers can expect if the National Party is successful in fully privatising the telecommunications provider.

“The cutting of thousands of jobs is purely aimed at lifting the share price.

It’s about getting their costs down and boosting the bottomline so that the share market will see a higher return to shareholders and therefore increase the share price.

Blind Freddy can see though that if you don’t have as many people in the organisation, that something has to give and that something will be the very thing that country people have been crying out for, **SERVICE!!**

I’m sure country people will see through this ploy by the Government – we aren’t stupid.

The National Party may think they have a mandate to sell Telstra but let me tell them that if they continue to go down the path of fully privatising Telstra it will be at their peril – it really is the last test for the Nationals,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor says it is also concerning that the Prime Minister is now talking openly about relaxing foreign ownership rules to allow overseas buyers to participate in the bid for Telstra and that Australian jobs have already been shipped off shore.

“If the Prime Minister wants to open up the sale to foreign investors, he is worried that the sale won’t be able to be filled through the local investment markets and therefore could harm the Australian economy but in opening the sale up to foreign investors it also opens up the possibility of foreign control over our telecommunications which I don’t believe is in the National interest,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor earlier this week issued an invitation to the Minister for Communications, Senator Helen Coonan to visit the New England electorate and see for herself the telecommunication needs of people here and the current state of the infrastructure.

“I am looking forward to a positive response from Senator Coonan to come and meet with people in the New England electorate about Telstra.

I’m sure the people of New England would explain to Senator Coonan in the same way that they have to me – politely but firmly - that their telecommunications service needs further attention and they don’t want Telstra sold,” Mr Windsor said.

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